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ABSTRACT

The encyclopedia is designed as a reference work on the history, structure, and use of English. The first section outlines five phases in the development of the English language (origins, Old English, Middle English, Early Modern English, Modern English) and then proceeds to the varieties of world English and perceptions of English and its future. The second section focuses on English vocabulary: the nature, sources, and structure of the lexicon, its etymology, and special areas of vocabulary. Section 3 addresses these aspects of English grammar: theory of grammar; word structure; form classes; and sentence structure. The sound system (phonology) and writing system of English are treated in the fourth section. English usage is discussed in the fifth section, including varieties of discourse and factors in regional, social, and personal variation. In the final section, the learning of English as a native language and new ways of studying English are examined. Appended materials include a glossary, list of special symbols and abbreviations, lists of references and further reading, an index of linguistic items, an index of authors and personalities, and a topic index. (MSE)

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